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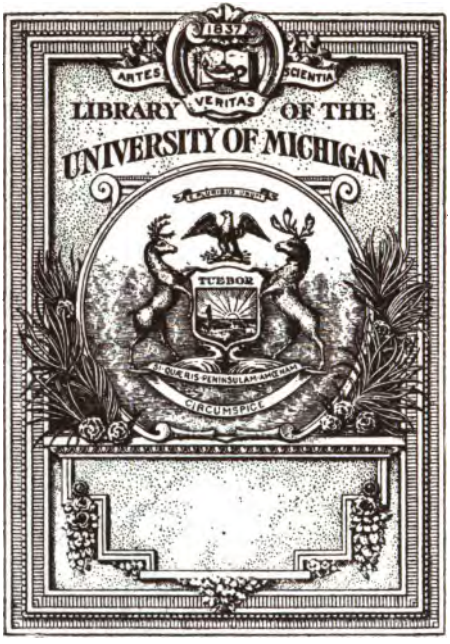

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CHARLIE CHATTERTON,

A MONTREAL STORY;

WITH

Canadian and other Poems,

BY

JOHN RUTHERFORD.

Montreal:
PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL ST. NICHOLAS STREET.
1868.

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To

HIS FRIENDS AT HOME,

AND IN

CANADA,

THE LAND OF HIS ADOPTION,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY

Dedicated

BY

The Author.

Charlie Chatterton:

A MONTREAL STORY.

CHAPTER I.

SMYTHE'S my name—S-m-y-t-h-e, not Smith—I am particular as to this, as I wish it to be distinctly understood that I have no connection with the notorious John Smith, or any of his class. And, having taken you thus far into my confidence, I don't mind telling you, also, that I am at present boarding at No.——, Bleury Street, with Mrs. Blotcher. I say Mrs. Blotcher, for, although there is a Mr. B., he is one of those meek, mild, submissive kind of mortals who may be described as "neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring,"—seldom visible to the naked eye, except at meal times, when he generally manages to take a pretty good cargo on board, asking no questions for conscience and his wife's

sake. Viewed domestically, Blotcher would have perfectly obeyed the command—husbands, submit yourselves unto your wives—had such a command existed. Rising every morning, summer and winter, at 5:30, Blotcher first proceeds to light the stove, and having infused a cup of tea, carries it to Mrs. B. in bed—saws the wood, cleans the knives and forks, and having swallowed his breakfast in solemn silence, he wipes the children's noses and disappears quietly through the back door till dinner time. Viewed professionally, Blotcher is a clerk. For fifteen long years he has occupied the same high-legged stool, in the chambers of Messrs. Gripper & Holdem, Attorneys, in Little St. James Street, during the whole of which time he was never known to be absent a single hour from business, or ever to have asked or received an advance of salary; on which account he is looked upon by the firm as a most estimable and exemplary man, and is an especial favorite with the junior partner, Mr. Holdem.

But things are generally pretty evenly balanced in this world, and if Mr. Blotcher's salary is light, so are also his duties. From his earliest infancy, Blotcher has cherished an inveterate hatred towards flies, and bluebottles are his special aversion. Woe to the unhappy one which ventures to light upon his desk, for down comes the ruler upon it, almost invariably resulting in a deep indentation in the mahogany, and the escape of Mr. Bluebottle. One hot summer's day in July, however, he had been particularly successful, having succeeded in killing six. I observed that he was in very high spirits that day; he wiped the children's noses a great deal oftener than appeared to be at all necessary, and seemed to be at peace with himself and all mankind.

The long days of winter are not, moreover, without their enjoyments for Blotcher; and keeping the stove warm during office hours, seems to him to constitute the whole duty of man. But business is business, and Messrs. Gripper & Holdem

are not entirely devoid of it. Occasionally a client will drop in, at which times Blotcher is always to be found with some lengthy deed, which he is supposed to be engrossing. Seldom is he off his guard, in this respect, for he has a quick ear for all comers. Once, and only once, did his acuteness fail him; for catching sight of a Brobdignagian bluebottle on the ledge of the office door, he rushed to deal him a mortal blow with the ruler, when the door being suddenly opened from behind, down fell the weapon with all the force of Blotcher's arm upon Mr. Gripper's nose. Horror-struck with the result, Blotcher retreated slowly to his tripod, followed by Mr. Gripper, who, in great wrath, demanded an explanation of his strange conduct; nor was he particularly well satisfied with poor Blotcher's mumbling explanation and apology.

"Now, Sir," said Gripper, after his wrath had somewhat subsided, "understand, once for all, that there must be no more tom-foolery of this kind in our

office. Has any one called during my absence?"

"Yes, Sir,—Mr. Sheephead."

"What did he call about?"

"He called about an account due him by a Mr. Bolter."

"Aw, very good—did you ask him if he applied to Bolter himself for payment, in the first instance?"

"Yes, Sir, I did."

"And what did Bolter say?"

"He told him to go to the devil."

"And what did Sheephead say he did then?"

"Why, Sir, he said he came to you."

O! Blotcher, Blotcher, you should open your mouth as seldom as possible, except at meal times, for as sure as you do, you are certain to put your foot in it. And for this, and the bluebottle affair, Blotcher would assuredly have got the sack, but for the consideration Gripper had for his large wife and family, which reminds me that I have yet to introduce you to Mrs. B.

Well, she is a rum 'un. On her stocking soles, I should say she measures five feet eight inches. Her head, which appears like a dumpling stuck upon her shoulders, is ornamented, in front, by a nose of a decidedly celestial tendency, and most suspicious brilliancy of hue. Her tongue wags with a persistency suggestive of perpetual motion. Where she was born or to what country she belongs, it would be difficult for any one to say; for when Blotcher married her, she had been the widow of a sergeant in a cavalry regiment, and had been in nearly every quarter of the globe. Charlie Chatterton, one of the boarders, who is a clerk in a dry goods store in St. Paul Street, says he doesn't believe that she was ever born at all, in the regular way, but that she must either have been got up by subscription, or got at a raffle, and I am almost disposed to agree with him. How Blotcher could have summoned courage to propose to her, remains to this day a mystery to all his friends. But it

is generally believed that he had no hand in the matter at all. Be this as it may, however, sure enough it is, that besides wearing the continuations, Mrs. B. is a fruitful vine; for in addition to four military encumbrances, a chest of drawers, and a wash tub, which she brought to Blotcher as dowry on her marriage day, she has added six pledges of various degrees of ugliness to the Blotcher family. Indeed the house never is without a baby; for no sooner does Mrs. B. have one off her hands than she invariably produces another. And although I am no great authority in such matters, I have shrewd suspicions that another infliction of the same kind is shortly in store for Blotcher.

Of the boarders generally there is not much to be said. With the exception of Charlie Chatterton, they are an ordinary, common-place lot enough, and when assembled, as usual, in the sitting-room of an evening, to enjoy a pipe, the conversation is not unfrequently made up of a

relation by each, of the fabulous number of boarding houses he has tried, in the vain expectation of finding something like the comforts of a home, and the supposed quantities of superannuated cow and bad butter which he had consumed. But, however varied their experiences may be in regard to these important points, it is wonderful to observe the unanimity of opinion which exists amongst them with regard to the boarding house cat, and its powers of adopting the "appropriation clause." In one instance, it had taken to wearing rubbers; in another, the sudden disappearance of hair oil, combs and brushes, could only be accounted for upon the supposition that it had taken to cultivate its whiskers. But the most remarkable instance of feline kleptomania is that related by Tom Simpkins, confidential clerk in the large soap and tallow works of Messrs. Hogg & Lard, Griffintown, where the cat actually smoked, and had taken a fancy to a favorite meerschaum pipe, to the color-

ing of which, Tom had for many months given his whole mind; and as all acknowledged that no loss they had sustained could be compared to this in cruelty and heartlessness, a universal vote of sympathy was passed for him.

Having no special grievances to record from my own experience in this way, I was generally wont to slip up with Charlie Chatterton to his room, where, recharging our pipes, we usually managed to have a quiet chit-chat on things in general. One important decision we soon came to, however, and which I must not fail to record, was that in future we should room together; and this we could easily manage, as Charlie occupied a large front room in which was a vacant bed.

It was on the 10th of last month that we finally resolved on this. Well do I recollect the date, for Blotcher got awfully drunk that night, and there was no end of a row in the kitchen, in consequence. Slipping down stairs, I beheld Blotcher lying prostrate upon the floor, in an ex-

ceedingly maudlin state, and Mrs. B. standing over him flourishing a potatoe smasher above his head, and vowing that she would put "an existence to his period." Blotcher, poor soul, lay helpless as a child; but after her wrath had expended itself a little, he raised himself slowly upon his elbows, and said:

"Look here, Shusan—I tell you what is, Shusan; you've scrashed my faish, and pulled my hair, and kicked me, in my own housh, and if you do anyshing more, you'll—you'll roush the Bri'sh Lion!"

"Shut up, you fuddled old idiot," roared his spouse, "and pack off to bed, and if ever I catch you going to the Axe and Anchor in Craig Street again, I'll break every bone in your body."

Thus was Blotcher finally put to bed, and, with the exception of occasional groans, distinctly heard all over the house, peace and quiet once more reigned in No. ——, Bleury Street.

CHAPTER II.

From the first day on which I saw Charlie Chatterton, I took quite a fancy to him; he appeared to be a light-hearted, easy-going sort of fellow, decidedly good looking, and altogether of a presentable sort. But it was not until after we begun to room together, that I learned much of his history, or found out his various peculiarities and little foibles. Not that he was by any means reserved—quite the reverse. One very cold evening, at the beginning of this month, whilst we were sitting together over the stove, Charlie took his meerschaum from his mouth, and after expelling a prodigious volume of smoke he said to me:—

"Well, Smith."

"Smythe," I said. — "S-m-y-t-h-e, Smythe's my name, and I beg that you will remember this in future, as I am very particular on this point."

"All right, old fellow; I'll try not to make that mistake again. Well, Smythe,

I've been thinking that since we have managed to tumble together in this sort of way, and are likely to be chums for the winter, at least, the sooner we get acquainted with each other the better. For my own part, I have not much to relate. You already know that I come from London, Ont. Before I left home, the governor was everlastingly down upon me for my want of business habits, and nothing would satisfy him short of my going to Montreal, to get what he was pleased to term "a brushing up." So here I am, a full fledged boarder in the house of Blotcher & Co. I easily obtained a situation, for my bosses do a large account with my father. But I have a most disgustingly small salary; something like midshipman's half pay, you know, Smythe,—nothing a year, and find yourself. But, I dare say, it's as much as I'm worth. However, I manage to keep things straight at home with the old lady, who, every now and again, pops a ten dollar bill into her letters, so that one way and another I manage to

get along pretty comfortably. She's one of the right sort, Smythe, and I'm sure you'd like her,—at least, I know *I* do.—Just shove another piece of wood into the stove--it's awful cold; there, that's a good fellow. By-the-way, the governor gave me no end of introductory letters to some of the big wigs here, which he said I was to be sure to deliver. Here they are,"—taking out his pocket-book and counting them--"one, two, three, four, five.--Now, as I have been in Montreal five weeks already, I think it is time I shouldbe looking some of them up. Well, heregoes for No. 1, to Donald Claymore, Esq., No.—, Beaver Hall Square. That's rather a fashionable sort of place, is'nt it, Smythe?"

"Yes," said I, "it is, and I can tell you—you must be on your p's and q's if you mean to put in an appearance there."

"Any nice girls, Smythe?"

"Of course there are," said I. "Why, man, Fanny Claymore is the belle of the city."

"You don't say so?"

"I do say so," said I, "and I mean it, too. And what's more, I can tell you, he'll be a lucky fellow who gets her; for, besides her good looks, she is a most amiable creature, I'm told, and the old gentleman, her father, is reported to be highly metallic. You must have seen her often in the carriage in St. James Street, though you did not know her."

"Well, well, I'll look them up some day soon," said Charlie; "and now, Smythe," said he, "it's your turn to unfold your tale, so out with it, and pass the tobacco."

"Well, it won't take long to do either," said I. "Smythe, Fitz Smythe's my full name, though I've dropped the Fitz since coming here. I belong to a very old family, the Smythes of Smythe Hall, Co. Wicklow, in Ireland. My father, of whom you may have heard, was for many years Colonel of the —th Hussars; but is now retired on half pay, and as there is a large family of us, and my father's estates are very much embarrassed, I have been forced to shift for myself. For three years I

remained in Dublin, hoping, through his influence with the Lord Lieutenant, to procure some government appointment, or failing this, that something would turn up. In these expectations, however, I was disappointed, and both my patience and funds becoming exhausted, I resolved to pack up my all, which did not amount to much, and with what little assistance I could get from my father, try Canada for it. And although you see me here, in the humble capacity of a clerk in the iron store of Crowbar & Hatchett, there is one thing I'm determined never to forget, and that is, that I am a gentleman. No, Charlie, I shall never forget that. None of your saloon bars, gin slings, or other liquid abominations for me. And if you are a wise man you'll do the same, and I have no doubt that we shall manage to knock out as much fun and rational amusement together as will enable us to pass the winter very agreeably. But there's the supper bell—I don't know how you feel, but I'm dreadfully peckish."

CHAPTER III.

My conversation with Charlie respecting the Beaver Hall people, appeared to have made a deep impression upon his mind; for I observed a marked difference in his deportment when together of an evening. He smoked furiously, though generally in silence, appeared moody and indisposed for conversation upon topics which formerly interested him; and when I endeavored to lead off upon any topic, all that I could get out of him was an occasional ah—yes, or no. This was so different from the previous state of things between us, that I resolved to have the matter cleared up in some way or other; and having a shrewd idea of the tack upon which he had gone, I said to him in an off-hand kind of way:

"What a beautiful place this Montreal is, especially in the neighborhoods of St. Catherine Street and Beaver Hall Square." I felt certain that the mention of this last named place would elicit something from

him; nor was I mistaken, for it seemed to act like a charm upon Charlie.

"Oh, yes," he said, "it is a charming place. I have walked all round it several times lately. By-the-way, Smythe, did you say Fanny Claymore was fair or dark?"

I replied that I had no recollection of having said that she was either, but that if it would afford him any comfort to know, she was fair, exceedingly fair, in every sense of the term.

"By Jove!" said he, "it must have been her then whom I saw at the window. I had my letter of introduction in my pocket, but could not get up sufficient courage to go in and deliver it. I must do it, however; for I have had a letter from my father, in which he says that he has learned, in course of correspondence with Mr. Claymore, that I had not made my appearance either at his house or at his store · ıd that he was much surprised at my not having done so."

"You should call at once, by all means, Charlie," said I, "as from all that I have

heard of the Claymores, they are very nice homely people, and I think you may fairly reckon upon meeting with a very cordial reception. I would give a thousand dollars, my boy, to be in your shoes, but no such luck is at all likely to come my way."

Now I must tell you that amongst the many discoveries I had made of Charlie's peculiarities since our associating together, I had remarked in him a highly nervous temperament, together with a strong tendency to spooneyism; and that anything in the shape of a lady's bonnet, with a pretty face in it, was sure to set his heart in a flutter. So that it was not without some misgivings that I looked forward to what might be the result to him of his introduction to the Claymores. The following day he had fixed for the delivery of his introductory letter at Beaver Hall Square. "There is" (says Shakespeare) "a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." And who is there amongst us who cannot look back to some such turning point in his

life. This was Charlie's, and how he availed himself of it the sequel will show.

Mr. Claymore was, as might be supposed, absent in the city when Charlie called at the Square, the following day. The carriage was at the door, and Mrs. C. stood ready dressed in the hall, waiting for Fanny, who was to accompany her on a drive. This was awkward for Charlie, who had prepared a very neat and elegant speech for the occasion, not one syllable of which could he now remember. So, fumbling nervously in his pockets for his letter, which, to his utter dismay, he found he had left behind; with a face of the deepest crimson, and a voice choking with emotion, he walked or rather sidled up to Mrs. Claymore, and stammered out, "I beg your pardon, mum, but I'm the young man from London."

"Oh! you are, are you?" said she, "and pray, what brings you here at this particular time? Thomas," addressing the footman, "show this young man down to the kitchen. I shall return in about a couple of hours, when I shall talk to him."

"Step this way, my good fellow," said Thomas, trying to look as important as possible. But Charlie's troubles were not at an end; for although there was no lion in his path, sure enough there was a favorite Scotch terrier waiting for his young mistress's appearance, to accompany her in the carriage, and down went Charlie's foot upon his tail, whereupon the brute set up such a howling as brought Miss Fanny down at the double quick.

"Poor Sancho, poor fellow, and did that stupid clodpole tread upon you, poor,—good doggie. Mamma," said Fanny, "is that the young man you expected from London, whom I saw go down stairs just now?"

"Well, I suppose so, my dear," said Mrs. C; "he says he's from London, so I presume it is he; but, as you know, I cannot spare time to talk to him at present. I have sent him down stairs; he can wait until we return."

"Yes, certainly," replied Fanny, "and serves him right, for treading on Sancho.

I always thought these English servants were particularly sharp, but that young man seems to be a regular clown. I fear he will never do to wait at table, mamma."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Claymore, Fanny and Sancho, stopped into the carriage, and poor Charlie found himself sitting on a wooden chair by the side of the kitchen stove.

"So you're the cove wot's come to look after the place, are you?" said Thomas.

"What place?" said Charlie, having somewhat recovered himself, and beginning to feel nettled.

"Oh! come now, none of yer gammon, young man; you can't play off that game on me, my boy. Have a glass o' beer and look pleasant. Cookie, have you any cold mutton to give us? We always takes our luncheon at this time, you know, and a jolly good 'un, too. The Hemperor and Hempress is generally hout at this time hevery day, so don't be frightened. You can peg away as hard as you like for the next two hours, if you like. There's never no one comes at this time

o' day except the bobbie on his beat. But if you expect to get this situation you've made a mess of it, to start with, let me tell you, young man. Why, bless you, you might as well have knocked the young missus herself down, as have tramped on the tail of that vile whelp. I've got the sack myself for something of the same sort; but it's a long story and I'll tell you all about it some other time. Take off your beer, man. Why, you're not eating a bit. And so you've just come from London, have you? I'm blowed if I would have thought so from yer haccent. My last guv'nor was Sir Horace Hunter, Baronet. He was a good 'un, he was. We came out here with the Guards, and I left him through some absurd misunderstanding about a diamond ring, which, somehow or another, went a-missing, and couldn't be found. I might have remained with this here family long enough, but for that cursed terrier. But I doubt you won't like this place, if you have been accustomed to a nobleman's family"

"I doubt either you or I have made some great mistake," said Charlie, looking mournfully into his glass, which stood before him untouched.

"Not a bit of it," said Thomas, "it's Molson's best. But if you prefer 'arf an' 'arf you can 'ave it hall the same. Cookie, hand us out a bottle o' stout. Don't let us do the shabby thing by our friend."

"No, no," said Charlie, getting very excited. "Why, man, I never was in service in my life, and don't want any situation, and if you will just step upstairs with me to the dining room for a minute, I'll explain."

"Explain the d—l," roared Thomas; "if you ain't been in service and don't want no situation, what in the dickens are you, and what brings you here? You've come to the wrong shop, my chicken, if you think you'll trap me into any burglary business. No, no, my lad, 'not for Joseph.'"

It was in vain that Charlie endeavored to convince him that he had no burglarious

intentions. Thomas was inexorable, and commenced shouldering him rather roughly to the door.

"I'll call and see Mr. Claymore myself," said Charlie. "Yes, I'll call at seven o'clock this very evening, and inform him of the manner in which you have used me."

"Did you say that seven o'clock was the hour," said Thomas, very sarcastically, "at which we were again to be favored with your company, young man?"

"Yes, I said seven o'clock; are you deaf, sir?" said Charlie,

"All right," replied Thomas; "then I'll take good care to have all the silver plate locked up at that time." As Thomas continued standing at the door, looking savagely after him, Charlie, expecting every moment that he would call out "police," took to his heels, and never stopped until he found himself once more safe within the four walls of Blotcher's house.

CHAPTER IV.

When Charlie appeared at the supper table that evening, I noticed that he looked unusually cross and out of sorts, and when I asked him how he had found all his friends at Beaver Hall Square, and particularly how he liked Fanny, he looked absolutely savage.

"Don't talk to me, Smythe," he finally said. "I feel very unwell to-night, and intend going early to bed," which I advised him to do at once, in the belief that a good night's rest was all he required to set him to rights. There was no social pipe or chat that night, and it was the first really unpleasant evening I spent with him since I had formed his acquaintance. What on earth could be the matter with him, I was utterly unable to imagine. I thought of all sorts of possible and impossible causes for his altered mood. Could he have been such an idiot as to have rushed into a declaration of love to Fanny, upon the strength of his

introductory letter, and met with such a reception as any sane man might have expected? Nothing short of some such mad proceeding on his part seemed adequate to account for his thoroughly woe-begone and dejected looks. It was not, however, until several days after, that I learned all the particulars of his unfortunate escapade, and I am free to confess that the source from which I derived my information was none other than our servant Betsy, who, having at one time been a fellow servant with the cook at Beaver Hall Square, had had the whole affair communicated to her, upon the express understanding that she wasn't "to say nothing to nobody about it." I could scarcely refrain from laughing while Betsy was telling me of it; but when she further informed me that the cook had rated Thomas soundly for what she considered his harsh treatment of Charlie, on account of her being herself in want of a young man, and having made up her mind that Charlie would suit her to a T, I could no longer

control myself, and tears of laughter rolled over my cheeks. From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but a step, and this step Charlie had taken with a vengeance. How he was to escape from the very awkward position in which he had placed himself, was to me by no means clear. Something, however, must be done. So I set my brains to work forthwith to find out what that something was to be, and how it was to be gone about without wounding poor Charlie's already lacerated feelings. With the knowledge I possessed of his highly nervous and excitable temperament, and of the difficulty of ministering to a mind diseased, I determined, after due reflection, to go gently about the matter. So, having first taken from Betsy a pledge of solemn silence to every one else on the subject, I proceeded up stairs to our room, where I found my poor fellow-boarder lying upon his face across his bed. He had scarcely uttered a word to me from that unfortunate day, and

even now took no notice of my entrance.

"Charlie, Charlie," said I, "get up, man—what's the good of lying there. Here's a letter for you."

"Who is it from?" said he.

"Well," I said, "since you have asked me such a ridiculous question, all that I can say is that it appears to be from some acquaintance of yours in town, though I would not be quite sure of that either, as the postmark is very illegible."

"Oh, from some one in town you think, is it?" he said, beginning to look up. "Who can it be from? Let me have a look at it, Symthe;" and a minute more found him deeply engrossed in what appeared to be a very business-like letter, the contents of which, as he proceeded with it, I could almost read in his face.

"Come, don't keep all the fun to yourself," said I, "tell us all about it. It contains no bad news, at all events, if I may judge from your looks." So he at once proceeded to read it to me.

No. —, St. Francois-Xavier Street,
December, 1868.

"My Dear Sir,

Having ascertained from Mrs. Claymore that a person had called at my house, stating that he had come from London; and suspecting from the correspondence I have lately had with your father, who furnished me with your address, that this person may have been none other than yourself, I beg you will do me the favor to call upon me, at the above address, when I will explain to you the nature of the circumstances which led to your meeting with such a reception as I understand you then met with.

I am,
Yours very truly,
Duncan Claymore."

No great persuasion was necessary to induce Charlie at once to comply with this request. And, truth to tell, I was as anxious to get the matter set at rest as

himself; for of late his society had been far from agreeable. He called accordingly on Mr. Claymore, who received him most cordially at his place of business, and explained to him how that, having discharged his present footman, he had requested an applicant for the situation who had recently arrived in the city from London, England, to see Mrs. Claymore, in whose hands he generally left all such domestic matters—and that they all regretted exceedingly the unfortunate mistake which had taken place. Mr. Claymore wound up by inviting Charlie to dinner on the following Friday, at six o'clock; and so he trotted home as happy as a sand boy.

That dinner party was destined to be a memorable event in Charlie's life. Friday came, and so far Charlie was equal to the occasion; for a good sized parcel had arrived for him which the label outside showed beyond a doubt to be for Charles Chatterton, Esq., from the fashionable clothing establishment of Dressem & Snip,

in Notre Dame Street, and which, on being opened by him on his return from business, proved to contain a very handsome dress suit, a satin necktie, and a pair of lavender kids.

"Why, Charlie, you look quite killing," said I to him, when he had finished dressing; "positively you are quite irresistible, and if you play your cards well, I shall expect to see a case of in-*fanny*-ti-cide in the papers to-morrow! Go in and win, my boy; 'faint heart never won fair lady, you know.'" So Charlie jumped into the cab which was waiting for him, and was duly deposited at Mr. Claymore's door.

"What name, sir?" said Thomas, looking very hard at Charlie.

"Mr. Chatterton," replied Charlie, in a somewhat low tone of voice.

"Mr. Chatterbox," roared the flunky, as he opened the door and ushered Charlie into the drawing-room, amidst an ill suppressed titter from the assembled guests.

Thomas, as has been already stated, had received notice to leave, and this was not the only mistake of the kind he made during the evening, whether intentional or not, I cannot say. But certain it is that a worthy couple, a gentleman and his wife, the latter a stout elderly lady, who, in proceeding up stairs, had her dress trodden on by her husband, forcing from her the angry exclamation — "Lor', man, Davie, get off my dress," were, from this circumstance, announced by Thomas as "Lord and Lady Davie." These, and the following particulars, I obtained from Charlie upon his return, on the distinct understanding that I was not to chaff him about it. I will not, however, recount all his misadventures on that occasion. Suffice it to say that he returned home that evening a regular dried up dry-goods man—in short, a complete *Fanny*-tic. We sat up that night talking until it was very late, or, I should say, early; for it was nearly one o'clock ere we retired to bed, and in course of our conversation, I learned that Charlie

had made most praiseworthy attempts to render himself agreeable to the family. On dinner being announced, Charlie could scarcely believe his ears when Mr. Claymore stepped up to him with the request that he would take Fanny down stairs.—Besides his devotions to Fanny during the evening, he was also most lavish in his attentions to Sancho, on the principle of "love me, love my dog." But Sancho really was a most loveable brute, and the perfect picture of a Sky terrier, with a coat like a door mat. By dint of coaxing, Charlie managed to get him upon his knee, for Sancho seemed to remember their last meeting, and to entertain a wholesome dread of him. Whilst talking to Fanny, Charlie commenced patting Sancho upon what he believed to be his head, and commenting eulogistically upon the beauty of his eyes, &c., and it was not until he was brought up in the midst of his *tete-a-tete* by a loud laugh from Fanny, which she was unable to suppress, that he perceived he had made a mistake, and had been la-

vishing his enconiums upon the creature's tail—a tail of which he now began to think he was never to hear the end; but Fanny's ready wit came to his rescue, and soon put him again at his ease.

CHAPTER V.

Matters continued to move on in the ordinary way at Blotcher's, nothing occurring amongst us in any way worthy of notice, with the exception of Blotcher's coming home occasionally in an obfusticated state, and the reproduction of the usual kitchen pantomime. On one occasion, however, he fell on the ice and broke his leg, which lamed him for life. As for Charlie, he became each day more and more particular in matters relating to his personal appearance. The growth of his moustache, and the parting of his back hair were causes of particular solicitude to him. He had also taken to writing

amorous ditties, several of which he submit ted to me for my opinion, and all of which I advised him to put into the fire as speedily as possible. One day, after dinner, he said to me, "I say, Smythe, what's the correct thing for a fellow to say when he intends to pop the question?"

"Well," said I, "Charlie, this is really too much of a good thing. You don't mean to tell me you have already arrived at this stage of the proceedings?"

"No, no," he said, "I merely want to know, in case of accidents. You know a fellow never knows what may happen; so it is always as well to be prepared."

"I fear, then, you must take your preparatory lesson from some one else," said I, "for I have resolved never again to interfere in such matters. You remember Duclois, the young French Canadian, to whom I introduced you some time ago. Well, he came once to me with the same request as you now make, telling me that he was paying his addresses to a very pretty young English girl; but, being

very deficient in his knowledge of our language, he was quite at a loss what to say to her. Without thinking much about it, and as much to get rid of the subject as anything else, I said to him: "Oh, just say to her, that if you were her guardian angel, you would watch over her always." The poor fellow seemed delighted. "Oh!" said he, "that ees gode, 'tees ver' mooch gode.—I directly go." So off he went instanter; and what do you think I afterwards learned he said to her? I'm sure you would never guess. Getting down upon his knees before his lady love, he exclaimed: "Oh! Madame, eef I was your angel in de gardain, I would wash you always ovare." No, no, Charlie, I will run no such risk with you. But let me merely say, that many who cannot summon the courage to face up, *viva voce*, on such occasions, do so by letter, either in prose, or in verse; though generally in the former."

"Oh! aw," said Charlie, "I'm no great hand at letter writing, but I *can* do something in the poetical way, though *you*

don't seem to think so, but I will prove it to you before you are a day older."

And sure enough he kept his word, in a way, for about two o'clock the following morning, I was awakened from a profound sleep by his shouting in the room, "Oh! I've got it, I've got it."

"Well, then, I hope you'll keep it," said I, "for the beggar has been troubling me all night."

"No, no," said he, "that's not what I mean. I've got some ideas in my head."

"I'm exceedingly glad to hear it," I replied, "for I was not aware of the fact before."

"Have you got a mucifer latch, Smythe?"

"If it is a lucifer match you want, you had better say so at once; you will find some in my coat pocket;" and having thrown on his overcoat, he lit the lamp and proceeded to secure his grand ideas on paper. These he showed me in the morning, in the form of a couple of

verses which appeared to be the production of a lunatic rather than of a sane person. They ran as follows :—

"I dreamt of thee, dear Fanny, last night,
As the lady whom I adore,
And these few lines to thee to indite,
I jumped out of bed on the floor.

Oh! Fanny dear, oh! Fanny dear,
I vow I'll love thee ever,
And for thy sake, I greatly fear
I've lost my heart and liver."

Through my strict supervision and carefulness to prevent the dispatch of these, and indeed all such like productions, and with as few contretemps as might be expected in the case of a nervous man like Charlie, matters continued to progress favorably at Beaver Hall Square. Charlie was now in his twenty-first year, and the sly dog had never told me that on attaining his majority he was to come into possession of a legacy of forty thousand dollars left him by an uncle who had been an indigo planter in India. But old Claymore knew this

well, so that when Charlie actually did "pop the question" to Fanny, and was referred by her to papa, he found the course clear, with nothing to do but go in and win. At the marriage I acted as groomsman. Charlie and his beautiful bride went on a tour to Niagara Falls and the States; and on their return the young couple took up their residence at the east end of St. Catherine Street, and many a time do I look in upon them of an evening, when Charlie and I sometimes get together in his sanctum to do a weed. Then do we fight our battles o'er again, and have many a hearty laugh over our sayings and doings in No. — Bleury Street.

I have now only to add, that shortly after the time when Blotcher slipped on the ice, he slept with his fathers, and Mrs. B—— appointed herself regent until Blotcher the second should reign in his stead.

Left and Overtaken.

CHAPTER I.—LEFT.

LEFT! I was a minute too late. The cars had just moved off, and I met the crowds of people, who had collected round the station on business, or from motives of curiosity, returning, just as I was within a few yards off it. A gentleman whom I had met at the hotel at which I had put up the previous evening, on my arrival at the village towards the outskirts of which the station was situated, just then passed, and recognizing me as an intending passenger of that morning's train, coolly informed me that the cars had started. I did not fully realize the fact till then.—"How? What? Why?" I exclaimed, utterly bewildered at the intelligence. The crowd went its way; I stood like one paralyzed, and was soon left alone with a

group of boys on the sidewalk, who seemed to contemplate me with curious interest.

This was my first personal contact with the actualities of travel—my first experience of what dependence on the stern, inexorable genius of steam, really means. That "time and tide await no man," I had long ago been taught as a matter of fact. That time and steam await no man, I had just proved as a matter of experience.

My personal insignificance and helplessness were forcibly brought home to me—nevertheless, I would not patiently admit the fact. A blind feeling of defiance and resistance sprang up within me. I would rise superior to this rebuff. I would yet find means to outmatch this unrelenting power that in thus proudly pursuing "the even tenor of its way," in sublime indifference to my wishes, seemed to mock and belittle me.

Full of this idea, I asked one of the boys whether he knew of any short cut by means of which, with a fast horse, I

might intercept the train at the next station. He merely answered by favoring me with a blank, astonished stare; and I dare say, was only prevented from laughing outright at my folly by sympathy for my misfortune.

I became aware that I was rendering myself an object of remark, if not of ridicule, and so resolved, without more ado, to accept my fate with as good a grace as possible under the circumstances. The hotel at which I had put up was but a few rods distant. Thither, then, I retraced my steps—slowly, under the clog of disappointment, measuring back the distance I had a few moments before so lightly traversed on the wings of expectation.

Some, on reading this, might be disposed to attribute my mishap to my own lack of punctuality. Against such a charge—should any one be uncharitable enough to make it, I must for my own credit, enter an unqualified protest. The train, I knew, was to start at six in the morning; and the understanding was that breakfast was to

be served up at a sufficiently early hour to allow intending passengers ample time to do full justice to this meal, ere the hour appointed for the starting of the train should arrive. I was up betimes, and had everything in readiness to leave at a moment's notice, long ere breakfast was announced. In fact, I hesitated about sitting down to table at all, until assured that I should have plenty of time; and indeed the clock of the dining-room yet showed about fifteen minutes to six, when, having concluded the meal, I sallied forth for the station.

In truth, my trust in this time-piece was the immediate cause of my missing the train. I had been told that the time of the hotel corresponded with that of the station-house; and, in point of fact, I believe this had always been the case until this particular morning, when in some unaccountable way the time of the former had fallen about a quarter of an hour behind that of the latter.

As evidence that the untoward event

did not happen through any special want of punctuality in me, I may instance the fact that there were four or five others left in the same predicament as myself. One of these was a lady who, seemingly, took the matter more to heart than any of the others, loudly enveighing against the hotel and all connected with it, declaring that "she had been imposed upon—that it was atrick practised upon the unsuspecting passengers, all for the good of the House—for as it was Saturday, and no train put off again till Monday, they would be obliged to remain there two days longer than they had calculated upon; and it was not likely they should be boarded for nothing." In fact, to such a length did this redoubtable virago go, that the accommodating landlord was fain to silence her wholesale denunciations and recriminations by engaging a team, to send her at his own expense to her destination, not many miles distant.

I and the others, however, who could not in the circumstances be accommoda-

ted in the same way, had no alternative but to remain where we were until Monday,—a dreary enough prospect for me, however my companions in misfortune might regard it.

They, indeed, appeared to take the matter lightly enough, and seemed only concerned as to the best manner in which to amuse themselves during their forced stay Some, who had friends in the village, got these persuaded to accompany them in hunting and fishing excursions, while others amused themselves in examining any objects of interest which the locality might afford.

I, who felt in no mood to join either party, betook myself to the sitting-room of the hotel. My reflections, I must confess, were not of the most cheerful nature. I had every reason, I fancied, to be dissatisfied with the aspect of affairs. Once the thought occurred to me of returning home. But a sudden recollection of the motives which had led me to undertake the journey, caused me to dis-

miss this idea almost as soon as formed. To proceed, on the other hand, might prove equally fruitless. The mission on which I was bound required my presence on the scene of action at a certain specified time, to ensure its success, and this time, I could not now by any possibility make.

A feeling of despondency possessed me, which I strove in vain to dissipate. Throwing myself on a sofa, I tried to divert my thoughts by reading a book, which, attracted by its title, I had selected from a number of volumes lying on a table in the room. But my thoughts, notwithstanding every effort, would run only in one direction. The eye, indeed, took in the words of the page; but my mind failed utterly to grasp their meaning. I flung the book aside in despair, and began pacing the apartment up and down, in no very enviable frame of mind.

One painful subject still haunted me, still weighed on my spirits with a paralyzing incubus, which I vainly endeavored

to shake off. Involuntarily my hand sought the breast pocket of my coat, and thence withdrew a carefully secured pocket book. Mechanically, I loosened the fastenings, opened it, and thence extracted a neatly folded slip of written paper, which I nervously clutched, and eagerly perused, as if from this simple act some inspiration or comfort were to be derived.

Just then, the landlady appeared with broom and duster in hand, in the performance of her morning visit to the apartment. I hastily folded the note, and replaced it in my portfolio, which I returned to its former place in my pocket.

The landlady, guessing no doubt by my distracted and troubled manner that I was one of those left behind by the cars, asked me if such were not the case. Having answered her in the affirmative, she forthwith began to express her surprise at the mistake which had led to my detention. It was the first time in her recollection, she said, that anything of the kind had occurred.

I replied "that such things would occasionally happen in the best regulated establishments; notwithstanding the blunder in the present instance proved very inconvenient to me."

"Still, it may be for the best," she said; "very often things which at the time, we thought to be altogether to our disadvantage, have in the end turned out to be the best things that could have happened us."

Now, something like this, I had all along been trying to say to myself, but had hitherto been unable to receive with that assurance necessary to produce any effect. I was not a little surprised at finding my own thoughts echoed and confirmed, in this manner, from such a quarter. But curious as it may seem, the mere utterance of these sentiments by this woman, in her own simple, matter-of-fact way, had more effect in soothing my mind than the repetition of them to myself a score of times could have had. The consolatory sayings and wise apothemgs, treasured

up by memory which, in moments of distress, we vainly strive to appropriate for our comfort, come with all the force of inspiration when delivered by another, who, standing on the superior ground of calm philosophy, undisturbed by the tumult of passion in which we are involved, speaks with a composure and confidence which go far to produce conviction. Driven by the pitiless storms of night over unknown wastes, the light, which held in our own hand would fail to point our way through the blinding and bewildering darkness—when seen gleaming from some hospitable cottage, happily unconscious of all the wild war of elements to which we are exposed, guides us at length, safely and surely, to shelter and repose.

Struck at hearing such words from one occupying the station of my interlocutor, I regarded her with more attention than I had vouchsafed her on her first entrance. She seemed a woman of about twenty-five years of age, tall, good-looking, with an

intelligent, pleasing expression of countenance. She went about the room easily and gracefully, dusting and sweeping, without, however, once intermitting her conversation with me.

"My father," she continued, "had always a habit when anything went against him of saying that everything was for the best. I mind once, while at a fair, (we lived in the north of Ireland) he lost a ten pound note. When he came home, we were all lamenting his loss. 'But,' says he, 'O, it's nothing, it's all for the best; who knows what harm that ten pound note would have done me, if I had not lost it—or what good it may do me, now that I've lost it?' Well, sure enough, it turned out as he said. Some days afterwards the money was advertised as found, and when my father went to claim it, he discovered that the person who had found it was a great gentleman; and as my father was a mason, and this gentleman had some large buildings to put up, the end of it was that my father got

the contract, and a good job he made of it. It gave us a start that kept us well off afterwards, as long as he lived. Well, that was my father's way of looking at things, and I think it is the best way too."

"Yes," I remarked, "no doubt it is, if one could always do so."

"What's to hinder?" she said; "when one has done his best and finds matters still go against him, he may be sure that it's better for him so, and that, if he got on just as he wished, it might be only for his hurt."

"That is very often the case," I remarked, not unwilling to prolong the conversation in this direction.

"Now, it's no fault of yours that you were left this morning. You were up early enough, and was ready to start long before the time, and you might have had your breakfast through, too, and been off in time even then, if you hadn't been deceived by the clock, or if even you had heard the whistle. They must have blown it lower than usual, or some of us

would have heard it, we are so near the station. But no one in the house heard it, a thing I don't mind of happening before, and we've been here ever since the rail-road commenced running."

"Well, it's one comfort," I said, "that my own negligence wasn't the cause of my being left, but after all it doesn't seem to help the matter much."

"No one knows what's to happen," she rejoined; "there is something strange in it; I always used to hear the whistle till this morning. I believe it was blown, though, at the usual time, though we didn't hear it. And that clock's never been known to play the same trick before. I asked all the girls about it, and they say none of them touched it, and they don't know of any one else's touching it."

"It's rather singular," I observed.

"Now, if this was a place where much drinking was carried on, it mightn't seem so strange. But as it is, there's little danger that any drunk person would be meddling with it. May be, though, it

stopped last night. Mr. ——— winds it up every night himself, and it might have run down before he wound it up last night, and perhaps if he was in a hurry or anything like that, he mightn't have been particular to set it ahead to the right time."

"That might have been," I acquiesced.

"Well, it's hard to say what luck is in it. May be something is to go wrong with the cars; they may run off the track, or get blown up, and then if you had got on, you might get hurt or killed. Or something may turn up by your being kept here; you may find out something to your advantage you aren't aware of, or see some one who has something of importance to tell you that you might never have heard if you had gone away as you intended. I have known such things to happen, and the like may happen to you, who knows?"

"Who knows indeed?" I mused, as my voluble sympathizer, her dusting and arranging done to her entire satisfaction, now

left the room. Something to happen, if it be something to help me out of my trouble, would indeed be welcome. But what can I hope for? what even wish for? What has life itself of fair or desirable to present, now that all those hopes which erewhile formed its most inviting charm are fled forever.

Such reflections as these, however, were not calculated to improve my situation, or dissipate my melancholy. I crossed over to one of the windows of the apartment, looking out upon the street, which formed the principal thoroughfare of the village.

It was the month of August. The day, which was now somewhat advanced, was warm and sunny, with a clear, cloudless sky, of the most ethereal blue. A mild, refreshing breeze, springing from the south-west, came fluttering in among the crimson curtains of the open window, imparting a soothing sense of coolness to my fevered brow and flushed face, as with the apathetic langour of dejection I

gazed out on the varied prospect spread out before me.

The room in which I stood was on the second floor of the house, so that from my comparatively elevated position, I had a view of the country for some distance round. It was, indeed, a view which, in a more congenial frame of mind, would have delighted me with its romantic beauty—and as it was, I could not help surveying its many features of loveliness without a feeling of subdued and quiet pleasure.

Beyond the village itself, which lay directly before me, with its trim gardens, cottages and places of business, a charming prospect of green pastures, waving fields of grain, with here and there a rich clump of dense shady wood, opened up to view. Some of the fall wheat fields were ripe; and their rich golden hue contrasted pleasingly with the sober green of others in a less advanced stage. Men were at work, cutting down such grain as demanded the labors of the reaper. For the most part

the old-fashioned hook and cradle were used; but in some cases these were superseded by the more expeditious and labor-saving reaping machine.

The entire scene of rural loveliness was further enlivened by the broad meanderings of the rapid river, which, having done duty in setting the various mills and factories erected along its course in motion, now bounded free from all control, shimmering in the flashing sunlight through fruitful fields of grain, through pastures stocked with flocks and herds, and past sombre, solemn woods which, darkly shading its bosom, suggested a time not far off, when its whole course had been overshadowed and graced by just such rugged, sylvan scenes.

My attention was suddenly withdrawn from the contemplation of this pleasing landscape, by observing an elegant carriage containing two persons, a lady and a gentleman, and drawn by a spirited team of horses, advance rapidly and draw up before the hotel, right under the window

where I was standing. There was something familiar in the appearance of the vehicle which excited my curiosity, ere yet I had an opportunity to scan critically the features of either of its occupants. I watched the pair narrowly, as, having alighted and given their horses in charge to the ostler, they now turned to enter the hotel. No sooner, however, had I observed them nearly than I drew back with a sudden thrill of deepest emotion, and with difficulty suppressed an exclamation of surprise; for I had recognized them.

But that the reader may be able in some degree to understand the feelings which agitated me so powerfully, I must go back and acquaint him with the leading facts of my past history, in so far at least as they may serve to throw light on my situation.

CHAPTER II—A RETROSPECT.

My name is Frederick Stockton. It is necessary that I should note this fact,

trivial as it may seem; for it is of vital importance to my narrative, as the sequel will show. I was then twenty-one years of age. My father was a farmer, and my boyhood had been spent at home on the farm; but early manifesting a predilection for mechanical pursuits, I was at the age of fourteen apprenticed to the joining and cabinet-making business. Having completed my apprenticeship, I engaged in an extensive furniture factory in the thriving little village of Rosedale, situated at the distance of ten or twelve miles from my father's residence.

Here, by industry, skill and attention to business, I won the confidence and regard of my employer to such a degree as in a short time to be entrusted with the charge of the whole establishment. And so pleased was my employer with my management of his affairs, that latterly, in order, as he said, to secure my services permanently, he had proposed to take me as a partner in the business, on what appeared both to myself and friends very advantageous terms.

But one thing prevented me from at once accepting this proposal. A friendship, which in my boyish days I had formed with a young and amiable girl in the neighborhood, had, as I grew up into manhood, been developed into a deeper and more tender feeling. To be plain, I was in love, and this feeling had gained such an ascendancy over me as to make every other consideration secondary to itself, and to cause every undertaking to be looked upon with favor or otherwise, just as it might or might not receive the sanction of this controlling power.

Matilda Meadows was now about twenty years of age, beautiful, accomplished, the belle of her native village.

Her father, Governor Meadows, as he was sometimes called, was extensively engaged in commercial pursuits, and had succeeded in amassing a large fortune. But though accounted one of the wealthiest men of the place, he still retained that simplicity of life and bluff heartiness of manner which, in his younger days and

in an humbler state, rendered him the favorite of all, and contributed not a little to his rapid advancement and success. He never betrayed any of that silly vanity and ostentatious pride which too often mark the conduct of those who, by any means, rise from a low condition in life to the attainment of wealth and consequence.

Being thus, in the fullest sense of the term, a self-made man, he knew at the same time how to value riches, and to appreciate those qualities of character which in themselves are excellent, independently of the position of their possessor. Hence it was that, whenever a poor but worthy lad, struggling to improve his condition and ambitious to rise, came under his notice, he not only cheered him on, but when an opportunity for so doing presented itself, was always ready to lend him a helping hand.

This disposition in Mr. Meadows, it was, which led me to hope that I might, even with his approval, presume to the

hand of his lovely daughter, notwithstanding the wide difference in our fortunes. I knew that he judged of a man's standing, not so much by what he had already achieved as by his will and capacity to achieve.

And in truth I had every reason to believe that my attentions to Miss Meadows, which were so pointed that there could be, I fancied, no mistaking of their object, were not at all displeasing either to herself or her father.

In fact, I considered myself a favorite with all the Meadows family, which consisted besides my adorable Matilda and her father, of an elder brother, at the time of which I write, a student at the Toronto University, two younger boys, and a girl, the baby and pet of the household, though then upwards of six years old. Their mother had died in the infancy of this child, but her place was well supplied, at first by a maiden aunt, and latterly by Matilda herself, whose kind, motherly manner towards her brothers

and little sister, formed in my eyes not the least pleasing of her many attractions.

As the village of Arnville, in which they lived, was but four miles distant from Rosedale, I had frequent opportunities of enjoying the society of this agreeable family, all of whose members were as dear to me as if I was indeed one of their number.

I kept up a regular correspondence with young Meadows during his absence at college. I was cordially invited to spend whatever leisure time I could spare from business at the Meadows' mansion, and whenever I availed myself of this invitation, was invariably kindly received by the whole family.

Thus encouraged as I thought in my pretensions, I did not seek to check the growing attachment which I felt springing up in my mind for Miss Meadows. Indeed to do so would have proved a fruitless task. I felt that my affection for her was of too deep a nature ever to

be eradicated. My feeling towards her was of a pure, devoted, wholly unselfish character, such as alone can form the basis of a real and lasting regard. Her image was ever present to my thoughts—her idea entered into all my schemes, and twined itself inseparably with all the intricacies of my being; life itself apart from her seemed to offer nothing desirable—and no object which had not some reference more or less direct to her, could long engross my attention or claim my regard.

But why need I enlarge? To him who, like me, has been in love with a pure-minded girl, possessed, as he supposed, of every excellence of person and of mind, the state of my feelings will be sufficiently intelligible—to him who has not, anything I might say would appear as so much unmeaning verbiage.

As for Miss Meadows herself, I had, as I have said, every reason to suppose that in her secret heart she was not only conscious of my affection for her, but was also not indisposed to regard it with

favor. She had many admirers who were assiduous in paying court to her, but I flattered myself that I was the favored one. Indeed, were it not for the preference which, in many ways, she seemed to manifest for me, I might never have presumed so far as even in thought to aspire to her hand—so great a barrier did I consider the difference in our respective stations to be.

Latterly, however, I fancied I had discovered a change in Matilda's manner. She appeared to feel embarrassed in my company, and seemed rather to shun than to court my society. Simultaneous with these symptoms of change in her feelings towards myself, I observed that she now appeared to delight more in the company of others.

A young lawyer, a pert, empty-headed fop of a fellow, had recently come to reside in Arnville. With an assumption of superiority characteristic of his class, he at once singled out Miss Meadows as the object of his special attention—no doubt,

on account of her reputation as the acknowledged belle and wealthiest heiress of the place. It would ill comport, no doubt, with his idea of his own importance and dignity to stoop to pay his addresses to any but the first lady in the land—at least, that part of it in which his lot for the time being might be cast.

I was mortified to find that his advances were not only tolerated but favored by Miss Meadows. What she perceived in him to admire, I was at a loss to know. I had formed such an idea of her good sense that I could not conceive how she, who had such a keen perception of the ludicrous, could for a moment endure the ridiculous affectation and inane platitudes of this self-conceited coxcomb.

Nevertheless, the fact that his society was not only tolerated but sought by her, stood out to all appearance plainly enough —and however unwilling at first to do so, I could not but at length admit to myself that it was even so. That any one whatever should be preferred before me in

Matilda's affections, was of itself sufficiently painful, but that I should be neglected for such a worthless fellow as this, was humiliating to the last degree. Had I been superseded in her regards by one whose merits made his claim to favor better than my own, I could have borne it with some degree of patience, from the reflection that what was my own loss, was the gain of one dearer to me than even life itself. But to see myself rejected for a fellow whose recommendations to favor were his foppery in dress and demeanor, a vapid regularity of feature and effeminate smoothness of complexion, which some were pleased to call good looks—this is what wounded me to the soul.

I determined to bring matters to a crisis. My employer, as I have already said, was desirous that I should engage with him as partner in the firm in which hitherto I had stood in the relation of a subordinate. Nothing, I was convinced, could be more to my advantage, so far as material interests were concerned, than to

accept this proposal. By this means, I had every prospect of rising to as eminent a position in life as it had ever been my highest ambition to attain, and, as far as money could do so, of forming to myself a home such as it had ever been the dearest wish of my heart to possess.

But even on the threshold of fulfilled desire—on the borders of the promised Canaan of hope—I paused and hesitated. All my plans had been formed with the idea of Matilda ever present to my thoughts. I had proposed to myself no scheme, had promised myself no pleasure which she was not to applaud and to share. And now, if she who was so intimately bound up with all my projects for the future, should disappoint me, I felt that everything from which I had anticipated so much enjoyment, would, without her, be only vanity and vexation of spirit.

I resolved, therefore, ere committing myself to any settled mode of life, to ascertain the real state of her feelings towards me. This I chose doing by letter

rather than by a personal interview. I therefore wrote to her, making confession of my love; informing her of the strength and long duration of my passion, reminding her that once her manner towards me was such as to encourage me to hope, and that I was not aware of having done anything to lead to a change on her part. Then I briefly explained my present position and future prospects, adding that it had always been my aim to preserve a name spotless and without reproach; and if she would graciously consent to assume it by becoming my wife, it would ever be my care that she should never have occasion to blush for it. Could she, by throwing in her lot with mine, and agreeing to accompany me in this way o'er the voyage of life, hope to promote her own happiness, I could assure her she would be completing mine. In conclusion, I remarked that of course all would be conditional on her father's consent, whose views on the matter I had written to ascertain. Should his answer, I wrote, be favorable, as I had

little doubt it would, and should she herself make no objection to my proposal, I appointed an early day wherein to call upon her, and talk the matter over in a personal interview, as it was of too intimate and interesting a nature to be wholly disposed of by letter.

My note had been sent to Matilda by the post-boy, who called every morning and evening at both Rosedale and Arnville, on his way to and from the extreme stations forming the opposite limits of his daily route. On the following morning, by the same convenient carrier, I received Miss Meadows' reply. The reader who has ever been placed in like circumstances, can imagine my eagerness to ascertain its nature. Had I ventured to guess its contents, could I ever have anticipated their real character? On opening the note I read as follows:

"Dear Fred:

"Before receiving your communication I was already engaged, which must be

my apology for not acceding to your proposal. I am, of course, sensible of the great honor you intended me—name and all—but regret exceedingly that on this account I must decline it. I have no doubt, however, that you will find a more suitable person to take my place in the manner proposed, and one more worthy of you, as they say in novels. I know of *one*, young, amiable and fair, who, if all reports be true, will be glad to make you amends for my inability to comply with your kind wishes on this occasion.—May I wish you joy and a pleasant sail o'er the voyage of life as well.

"I am glad to hear that you are getting on so well. No doubt, if you persevere you will yet achieve something worthy of yourself, and rise to a position equal to your present favorable prospects. I heartily wish you every success.

"I am not going to write you a long letter this time. As I expect to see you here so soon, there is no need that I should write at greater length. Writing is so un-

satisfactory at the best; and sometimes you have got things to say of too interesting and intimate a nature, to be with any pleasure entrusted to unconscious paper. I have got such a lot to tell you! but I would rather not, until I have an opportunity of seeing you here at home—a pleasure which I hope soon to enjoy. Until then *au revoir*, and may you enjoy yourself to your heart's content.

"Papa is obliged for your kind letter.—He thinks you are getting on wonderfully—approves your ambition, and hopes that what you have already accomplished will only spur you on to greater efforts. He sends you his compliments, and wishes me to say that he is quite well. And as I am about it, and to wind off in due form, I may say that I am well also, and the rest of us, hoping this may find you the same.

"Your affectionate

"MATILDA."

I was confounded, bewildered, amazed. I read the note over and over again—carefully scrutinized the address and signature to make sure that it was really written by Matilda, and intended for me. There could be no mistake on these points. I could not comprehend it. There was such a tone of mingled sarcasm and levity pervading the whole, as I was altogether at a loss to account for. Of one thing, however, I was certain—my misery was complete. Matilda, my Matilda, was engaged, in all likelihood, to that brainless, heartless lawyer, whose influence, I had now no doubt, had been the cause of her changed manner towards me. But what did she mean "by one amiable and fair," who was to make amends for her inability to respond to my wishes? Had I by my conduct given her cause to think that my affections had strayed to another? and had she but retaliated in thus favoring and accepting a rival suitor? I could not recall a single instance where any act or word of mine could be possibly construed

in this manner. The whole was a puzzle, inexplicable on any theory I could frame.

I would fain have believed the note spurious, were it not that the handwriting and signature plainly indicated it as Miss Meadows' own. And then every sentence almost had some ironical allusion to something contained in my letter to her, and was evidently intended as a reply—though conceived in a spirit, I had almost said, of vindictive malevolence, such as I could not imagine Matilda capable under any provocation of manifesting.

Indeed, the whole tone, the style and manner of address, seemingly so reckless—and I could not but admit to myself so heartless—I could not at all reconcile with the idea I had formed of the sweet and amiable Miss Meadows. Was it that, in being lost to me, she was also lost to all those gentle sympathies and refined feelings, which, in my estimation, had invested her with so many and engaging charms. That I should be forced to admit such a conclusion, so repugnant to

every feeling of my nature, was the most cruel stroke of all. Her idea had in my mind been associated with all that is generous and good, elevated and pure; and now, in relinquishing all hope of ever claiming the beautiful Matilda as my own —must I also relinquish the exalted idea I had formed of her character—dismiss that upon which I had set an inestimable value, as something of no account, worthless and base? Anything but this, I said. Nay, rather let me cherish the idea of my beloved Matilda as I knew her—kind.

Nevertheless, I carefully preserved the billet which had wrought my woe. It was the same which the reader saw me peruse a moment ago. There was a strange charm about it, which would not permit me to destroy it. It was all that remained to me of fair hopes now blasted, of past pleasures and anticipated joys, now vanished "like the baseless fabric of a vision." It was my only memento of the loved, but now lost Matilda. As such, I

resolved to preserve it—with what motive I could not perhaps have explained to myself—it may be as a means of reminding me how much I had lost in the past, and how little I had to hope from the future, that, in this way, I might be the better fortified to pursue the course I had marked out for myself.

For I had resolved to throw up my engagements in Rosedale, and seek relief in change of scene and occupation. How, I questioned with myself, could I sit down amid the wrecks of my former self—how could I witness another in possession of my most cherished treasure, and still pursue the even tenor of my way as before? The thing was impossible. Let those who will, call such a state of feeling, folly. Once I could have laughed with the loudest; but now all was too real, too present to be got over by either reason or ridicule.

My love for Matilda had become the ruling passion of my mind—the centre round which all other thoughts and feel-

ings, hopes and fears, revolved. It had penetrated the inmost recesses of my being, the most deep and sacred as well as the most common and superficial. It obtruded itself in my buying and selling, my waking and sleeping, and was present even at my devotions. It was the amalgam which had served to draw out and shape the scattered golden sands of my life into beauty and form; and now that it was dissipated, all had crumbled away into rubbish and dross. It was the foundation of my gorgeous air castles, and now that it was removed, all came toppling down in hopeless destruction, overwhelming me amid the ruins.

I considered it, however, weak to despair. I resolved to rise superior to my misery, and set about building such a superstructure of happiness on the ruins of my former Paradise, as was still possible with what materials yet remained to me.

My leisure moments I had often employed in acquiring a knowledge of the

beautiful and useful art of phonography, and in training myself to ease and correctness in the different styles of composition. I had frequently engaged in writing articles on various subjects for the press, and my contributions had been always favorably received. I now applied for and received employment as correspondent and reporter for one of the most influential papers of our Province. My duties were to commence in reporting the proceedings of a great and interesting celebration to be held at a certain distant locality on my way, to reach which I was detained, as has been described. Owing to this mischance, I could not now by any possibility be in time to fulfil my engagements. But having carefully weighed all the circumstances of the case, I still remained fixed in my determination to proceed—hoping that my employer would excuse my failure when he came to know the unavoidable nature of the causes which led to it.

At all events, my resolution was unal-

tered not to return home. The excitement of travel had seemed to be the only thing suited to my case—but in order to reap any benefit in this way, I must have some object in view apart from the desire to dissipate my melancholy. Such an object I supposed I could not better secure than in noting down such incidents worthy of remark as, in the course of my wanderings, might come under my observation. And although apparently baffled in my design at the very outset, I had resolved to prosecute it still, if possible, to a successful issue. This had been my final resolution, when my attention was arrested and my feelings agitated in the manner described, by the appearance of a carriage at the door and my recognition of its occupants.

CHAPTER III.—OVERTAKEN.

For in these I saw before me none other than Miss Meadows and her brother, whom I have mentioned as a student at

the University. My feelings at this moment can be better imagined than described. I was overpowered by a tumult of conflicting emotions. Surprise, too, at their unexpected appearance, possessed me. With what object had their journey been undertaken? and what strange coincidence had brought them to the very place at which I had been so unwillingly detained by my disappointment of the morning?

From my point of observation I could watch their movements without fear of being myself observed. The landlord met them just as they were about entering the door.

"Is this the house at which passengers who go by the cars usually put up?" I heard Mr. Meadows ask.

"Yes, Sir, it is here they mostly all stay," replied mine host.

"Did any one leave here by this morning's train—any stranger I mean?"

"No, though there were several here who intended going, but owing to an

unfortunate mistake, were prevented from doing so."

This was all I could hear, as the next moment all three had disappeared through the open door; and when once within, the sound of their voices, shut out by intervening barriers, became too faint to enable me any longer to distinguish what was said.

Agitated and confused as I was, I endeavored to compose myself to an outward expression of calmness; for from various reasons I did not wish to betray the state of my feelings to Miss Meadows, should I by any chance meet with her during her stay—an event which happened much sooner than I had calculated upon.

In a few minutes I heard footsteps ascending the stairs leading to the room in which I was; and the next moment, ere I had barely time to snatch up a book and fling myself on the sofa to give the appearance of preoccupation, the door of the apartment was thrown open, and Matilda

and her brother made their appearance, ushered in by mine host himself, who, however, immediately afterwards took himself away—leaving me alone with those two, whom of all the world I felt it most embarrassing thus to encounter.

How violently my pulses beat. My very breath came thick and labored with the weight of emotion which oppressed me. Nevertheless, I endeavored to appear calm. Reclined as I was on the sofa, I kept the book open before me, as if quite unconscious or quite regardless of the presence of others.

Matilda seated herself in a chair at some distance from me. I had not yet dared to glance at her, but I felt her presence none the less. Her brother, after seeing her seated, asked her if she was not fatigued.

"O! no," she replied, "not in the least."

It was the same gentle voice to which I had often so delightedly listened. How it thrilled through me now.

Her brother, walking over to the table, seemed to busy himself in looking over the books arranged there—while I felt that his attention was wholly taken up with me. I awaited breathlessly the development of events; for I felt that in the attitude I had voluntarily assumed, all movement must come from without myself, and apart from any active interposition of mine. I therefore remained passive,—seemingly engaged with my book, though I felt my situation becoming every moment more and more embarrassing—feeling assured, as I did, that they had recognized me, and must be aware of the fact that I was studiously ignoring their presence.

Presently, young Meadows stepped over to where I was, and laying his hand familiarly on my shoulder, cried out, in his frank, hearty way:

"Hallo! Mr. Stockton—Fred—is it you? How d'ye do?" he added, offering his hand in such a cordial, friendly manner, that I was fairly forced out of my

studied reserve, and getting up grasped his extended hand, at the same time returning his salutation coldly enough, I am afraid.

"How do you do, Mr. Meadows? I did not expect to see you here."

"No, it seems not—and having seen me here, you don't seem over rejoiced at the sight. Here I have been this last half hour, manœuvering to draw you out from behind that impregnable barricade of yours—to have at least a peep at you—and you, though you must have been aware of my presence, still kept yourself as carefully concealed as if you were a stray Fenian, and were afraid every moment of being gobbled up; and now, when I have at length succeeded in unearthing you, there you stand as cool and collected as if I wasn't your old chum and faithful friend, whom you haven't seen for the matter of the last three months or so. Might I take the freedom of a friend, I would say that your conduct surprises me. You were not wont to be so self-involved and reticent

at meeting with me. After this I cannot certainly say with good, honest Shenstone, 'that my warmest welcome still was in an inn.' But, perhaps in inns, as in dreams, things go by contraries. There you are received cordially by strangers and coldly by friends—eh? What book is that you were so deeply engaged with on my entrance?" he asked, turning round to where, on being accosted by him, I had laid it on the table.

It was a volume of Tennyson's poems. Mr. Meadows, as he spoke, picked it up, and opened it where a slight parting of the leaves still indicated the place where I had been reading, or rather pretending to read. He glanced a it.

"Tennyson, no less—and of all Tennyson—Locksley Hall," he broke out, "'Comrades, leave me here a little.' Just so, just so," he said, absently, "that's the game, is it?"

He turned over the leaves.

"'O, my Ami, shallow-hearted, cousin Ami, mine no more,
O the dreary, dreary moorland, O the barren, barren shore.'"

As he read these words, I stole a glance at Miss Meadows. I thought she appeared disturbed and blushed perceptibly.

"Pleasant reading, upon my word!" continued Meadows. "But what Quixotic expedition is this upon which you are bound?" he abruptly asked. "On coming home, first thing I heard was that you had just started on your travels, to be away for an indefinite period, and that without ever having given me the slightest intimation of your intention. Was this kind? Was this at all in harmony with what I might be led to expect from our long and uninterrupted friendship? If you care little for these things, I must in justice to myself say that I do not. I was so disappointed at finding you absent on my arrival, and so hurt at the unkind manner of your leaving, that I immediately adopted the resolution of travelling also, as a relief to my feelings; and now that I have accidentally met with you here, I think the least you can do, as some amends for your unfriendly

behavior, is to forego any special programme you may have formed for yourself, and let me have the pleasure of receiving you as my *compagnon du voyage* on the journey I propose myself."

"If you had that regard for me you profess, Mr. Meadows," I replied, "you might now, I think, drop these jesting, frivolous remarks of yours."

"Pray, are you keeping guard over the skeleton chamber, that you must in this way cry hush! and with such a solemn air reprimand me for undue levity?"

Then, with an abrupt movement, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he looked round to where his sister was seated.

"Bye-the-bye, how has my charge been getting on all this time?" he said. "Truly, wonders will never cease! Here is a young lady," he continued, laying his hand on my shoulder, and pointing towards his sister, "who seems to have caught the same infection as yourself. She is now so wholly absorbed with that newspaper, that, from her manner, you

would never guess she was conscious of our presence at all."

Upon this, Miss Meadows somewhat relaxed her hold on the paper, and I could see that she colored deeply, and appeared painfully embarrassed and confused. Great as my cause was to feel agrieved at the manner in which she had acted towards me, I could not altogether repress a feeling of the old tenderness with which I was wont to regard her; and the evident pain and embarrassment caused her by this, as I thought, inconsiderate sally of her brother's, could not but excite my sympathy, knowing them, as I did, to be all owing to my presence.

"Is Saul among the prophets? My ward, here, was never very remarkable for her devotion to literature before," continued her brother, quite regardless or quite unconscious of the effects produced by his seemingly random shafts. "There must be something peculiar in the atmosphere of the place, or some wizard must be about, exercising his cantrip arts, to

cause those who enter here to take so persistently to reading. This would surely be a favorable locality for an educational seminary. The great difficulty which a pedagogue would have to encounter in the discharge of his duties would be to get his pupils to look *off* their studies occasionally. Were it not that I am such an active, bustling fellow myself, I must have succumbed to the enchantment, too, ere this, and betaken myself to that patriarchal arm-chair yonder, with Gulliver's Travels or Challou's Researches on the Gorilla, spread out before me."

"You are merry," I said, "but as you seem to be in such good spirits I think you can enjoy yourself without my company, so by your leave I will withdraw," at the same time taking up my hat and moving towards the door.

"Hold, Mr. Stockton, a moment. I hope you are not offended at my familiarity of manner or freedom of speech—such things are allowable between friends, you know; or, perhaps, you have taken

umbrage at my neglect to introduce you to this charming young lady, my companion, here. You must pardon me, as really I did not think of such a thing. I considered that you were both sufficiently well acquainted with each other already, to render any formal introduction on my part unnecessary; but as you both seem to have drank of the waters of Lethe, I shall take the liberty of going through the usual formula. Allow me, then, Mr. Stockton, to introduce you to my sister, —whilom known as 'Tilly the Tomboy' —but who may now, I think, with great propriety, be named 'Matilda the Meek.'"

"This farce," I replied testily, "has continued long enough, and therefore for the present you will excuse me if I bid you good-day; my presence here, I can perceive, is anything but desirable."

"Mr. Stockton, you will forgive my brother, it is his way."

"Thank you, Miss Meadows," I replied, curtly, "your brother is no doubt obliged to you."

"Well done! i' faith, capital!" broke in Mr. Meadows. "It's my turn now—'when shall we three meet again?' No; that's not it—

"'Why should a man whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?'"

"That may be very instructive; but I can't wait to hear you through. So good day to you"—I interrupted, at the same time stepping out on to the landing of the staircase.

"Well! Well!" cried Meadows, "one doesn't know where to find you these times. Perhaps in time I may become perfect in travelled deportment, too. Meanwhile, laying aside all nonsense as you call it," he added, in a more serious tone, stepping out after me on to the landing, "I have something of importance to say to you. So please come along with me, a moment. If you have any regard for me, you will not surely refuse me this favor. And you, Tilly," he added, turning to his sister, "I hope you will not feel lonesome during our absence."

"O, never fear me. I am only too glad to get rid of you."

"That's it," answered her brother, "still true to your sex—when I know that you will be all impatience till our return."

I followed mechanically. Indeed, at that moment, I could scarcely have done otherwise. My feelings had been so worked upon, and were just then in such a state of repressed excitement, as to render me altogether incapable of reasoning calmly on my situation, much less of striking out an independent course of action for myself.

On arriving below, Mr. Meadows, requesting me to remain where I was, went in search of the landlord. He soon returned with this functionary.

"A private room, did you say?" he was asking Mr. Meadows.

"Yes."

"I can accommodate you with that," he returned "come, this way;" and he led off to the other end of the long hall in

which we were standing, where, showing us in to what appeared to be the family sitting room.—"There," he said, "you can sit as long as you have a mind to; and I'll see that no one will disturb you. Shall I bring you in anything?"

"No, not now," replied Meadows.

He went out, shutting the door behind him.

"Pardon me," began Mr. Meadows, addressing himself to me, "if my conduct appear impertinent or trifling. But really, my object in soliciting this interview was to show you a letter I wrote some time ago, and on the style and subject matter of which I want your opinion. I think myself it is rather a clever production," he continued, something of the old lightness returning to his tone, "but I do not wish to prejudge the matter for you. However, might I, without presumption, venture a remark, I would say that I am very much mistaken if you do not find its perusal suggestive if not interesting. But I adjure you," he added,

suddenly changing his tone, as he saw symptoms of impatience in my manner which I could not altogether repress, "I adjure you as you value my friendship to read and digest it carefully. For this end, I will now leave you to yourself," and so saying, he went out, leaving me to my own reflections and the letter which he had previously taken care to place open in my hands.

At first, I felt disposed to rebel against this treatment and refuse compliance with a request conveyed in such an apparently flippant and trifling manner. I seriously debated with myself whether I was not compromising my dignity in thus consenting to act as a mere puppet in the hands of another. What if Mr. Meadows was merely using me for his sport, in the same spirit of reckless levity which his sister, as I thought, had on a former occasion manifested. I reflected severely on my pusillanimity in not having, from the first, manfully shaped out my own course of action, instead of al-

lowing myself to be led by one whose good faith I had many reasons to suspect.

I rose up with a determination to submit no longer to such humiliating treatment, and was on the point of resolving to return the letter unread, and refusing any further intercourse with the pair, who thus seemed bent on pursuing me even here with contempt and ridicule. But, on second thoughts, reflecting that my situation could not be rendered worse by any disclosures which the letter might contain, I concluded to read it. Besides, I had all along been haunted by a feeling sometimes approaching a conviction, that, under all Mr. Meadows' lightness, was concealed a serious purpose, which it imported me to know. I therefore resolved to banish every scruple and every misgiving for the present, and read the letter which had been so strangely placed in my hands, feeling assured that its contents in some way affected myself.

CHAPTER IV.—THE LETTER.

On glancing at the date, I found that it was but a few days old, and had been written by Mr. Meadows from Toronto to his sister, a fact which at first caused me again to hesitate about reading it. But, recollecting my resolution, I forthwith applied myself to its perusal—"My dear Matilda," it began, "what has possessed you, sister mine? Last week I wrote you with a request that you should come to the city, to be present, the first day after the closing of our term, at the launching of my new boat, which, in compliment to you, I had intended to call by your name. There was to be a splendid regatta on the lake, in which all the young men of our set were to treat their lady friends to a sail, and in which, as you were acquainted with them all, I of course expected you to join.

"All this, as I thought, was a simple and proper proposal enough, and I had no other expectation concerning it than

that you would merely write to let me know whether or not you could come. Well, I had a letter from you, it is true. But shades of Johnson! and all other writers of solemn bombast, what a letter it was! On opening it, the first thing I read was, 'Dear Sir.' I was thunderstruck. What! I said, 'Dear Sir!' no less. When did my little sister get so dignified? What new crochet is this has got into her simple little brain! Sir, forsooth, 'I have carefully considered your proposal, and coming as it does recommended by such good sense and prudence on your part, as well as enforced by all the good and generous qualities which have invariably marked your character and conduct, and cherishing for you such a regard as I do, how can I do otherwise than receive it with favour?'

O—O—here I drew a long breath. What a mighty sentence is this! I said, moving along towards its magnificent close with all the gravity and dignity of an epic poem or a tragedy in five acts.

'I have carefully considered.' Matilda carefully considering. Well, that's something new. 'Such good sense and prudence on your part.' The Meadows' interest is surely looking up. 'Matilda carefully considering.' 'Such good sense and prudence on my part.' 'And all the good and generous qualities which have invariably marked your character and conduct.' By my halidan, if that be not sound, it, at least, sounds well. The alliteration beats Addison's 'sin and sea-coal,' hollow; 'character and conduct,' forsooth. 'How can I do otherwise than receive your proposal with favour?' How, indeed! and such a proposal!

> E'en that she, with her peerless presence, might
> Grace the proud launching of my gallant boat,
> Upon the glassy wave.

After wading through that sentence, I launched off into heroics and blank verse as easily and naturally as Noah's ark, raised by the waters of the deluge, floated on to Mount Ararat.

But seriously, my dear girl, after reading your letter through, I am afraid there is some mistake, and I write to you with all haste, in order that, if such be the case, you may know of the error, and see to rectifying it, ere any unpleasant consequences should ensue."

I had read thus far, when Mr. Meadows entered, this time accompanied by his sister, who, while betraying a charming confusion, yet came forward with that easy grace and confidence natural to her.

"Well, Fred, I am back again, you see; and have brought this girl along with me, who, in spite of all her brave resolves, has felt the time pass heavily during our absence, and says she would rather not be left alone again. But what do you think of the letter? A model in its way, is it not?

"I have not yet finished it," I replied, "but what I have read would almost lead me to believe what I can scarcely hope to be true."

"Ah! this skepticism, so inherent in the human breast, and so prone to manifest itself in the most trivial as in the most important matters. No wonder that theologians preach so much against it. But I cannot stay to hear your criticisms or solve your doubts just now. I must go and see to hastening preparations for our departure, as I intend going off immediately. Meanwhile, perhaps this dear delinquent may be able to remove all difficulties to your entire satisfaction."

He went out. I was left alone with Matilda. She was sitting on a low settee placed on one side of the room, while I occupied a chair at some distance from her. How lovely she appeared at that moment. Her dress was plain but becoming. Matilda's taste in dress had always been one of those good qualities in her which excited my admiration. Whatever the prevailing fashion might be, and however uncouth and ungainly it might appear, as worn by others, she always in adopting it contrived to make it appear pleasing and attractive.

How she was dressed on this occasion I cannot presume to say. I am not sufficiently versed in the mysteries of ladies' apparel to be able to describe it critically, or to condescend upon those points which constitute its beauty and fitness or the opposite. I leave such things to milliners and those who affect their art. Like the untutored child of nature, who instinctively turns his eyes away from the formless waste, to gaze with delight on the lovely landscape, without pausing to consider what repels him in the one case or attracts him in the other, I am content to feel that certain modes of dress appear pleasing, while others violate all my ideas of taste, without waiting to inquire what particular combinations of color and of outline have contributed to the effect in either case.

Matilda, on this occasion, was dressed in such a way as to heighten, and if that were possible, improve her natural charms. She had divested herself of her hat and cloak, so that the full beauty of her lovely

face and graceful figure, shone out unobstructed by any such disguising envelopments.

If I had once supposed that my passion for her had been crushed or conquered, the intensity and power with which it revived at finding myself thus once more in her presence, would have convinced me that I was in error.

Nevertheless, irrevocably, as I felt myself at that moment to be in love with her, the feeling was far from plunging me into despair. From the first moment that her brother had accosted me, a vague hope had sprung up in my mind that Matilda should yet be mine—that all along she had been true to me however much appearances might seem to indicate the contrary. While reading her brother's letter, this hope had grown stronger and stronger, and now it had almost ripened into certainty.

We had both preserved silence for some time after Frederick had gone out—feeling embarrassed by the strangeness of our

situation—when Matilda opened a conversation by saying :

" I suppose you are surprised to see us here."

" I have been surprised," I remarked.

" Perhaps displeased at the manner in which we have acted towards you," she said.

" As to that," I rejoined, " I shall reserve my opinion until the object of your acting has declared itself."

" Pray, don't be so severe ; I have no intention to act a part—I only wish to be sincere."

" Pardon me," I said, interrupting her, " I did not mean to be severe, though I have felt aggrieved. This letter," I added, " which, at the earnest entreaty of your brother, I have been led to read, almost persuades me to hope—to believe —that—a mistake—in short, Miss Meadows, that the reply—"

" Which was intended for you, was received by him," she finished.

"And I was deceived, and you love me."

I had moved across the room to where she was sitting, and was now at her side."

"Can you doubt it?" she answered, "after all the trouble I have taken."

The next moment I had clasped her to my bosom.

"Bless you for a dear, good girl, as you are. But I have not yet found out the cause which led to the unhappy mistake."

"That is soon told. The reply to your note and my brother's were both written on the same day. I had written your different addresses on two separate envelopes, in each of which I had enclosed its proper letter. But ere I had time to seal them, I was called hastily away by the violent crying of little Susie, who had fallen and hurt herself, and in my absence one of the boys, Tom, who is always up to mischief of that kind, came in to my room, and seeing the two open letters lying on my table, quietly substituted the one for the other."

"The young rascal," I exclaimed, but my tone was not a bitter one.

"You must forgive him, as erally the poor fellow had no idea that the consequences of his playful act would have been so alarming." she said, archly. "In confessing it afterwards, he said he did not think there could be much harm in it, as the letters were only for you and for brother Frederick, anyway."

"The sly rogue that he is," I said.

"And when he came, nothing would do him but that I should go with him right after you, for he concluded that the mistake in the letters was the cause of your leaving so abruptly. You were just a day ahead of us. We found out which way you had taken; and when we came here, Fred saw your name entered on the books of the hotel as one of yesterday's arrivals; and the landlord told him that you were still here, having been left this morning by the cars. That's the whole story. And now, what do you think you deserve for running away in this manner, without ever thinking it worth while to come to see me, though I might have set you right, and saved all this trouble."

"Forgive me," I said. "How could I ever have given way to doubt? But then, the note I received did seem as if intended for me; and it did look so like a reply to mine, only written in such a ——. But I will not think of that. One thing, however, I don't quite understand. You mentioned that you were engaged; and I thought, it must surely be to that fop of a lawyer who used to be so much in your company. Of course, I don't think so now; but still, I cannot altogether understand it."

"That was my engagement to meet with yourself. But if your faith in me had been what it ought to be, you would have easily got over all such stumbling blocks? Did I think, when you ran away, that you had gone with some one else?"

"Nay, if you begin to speak that way, I must stop that pretty saucy mouth of yours," I said.

Just then the door opened, and her brother entered.

"Whew!" he whistled. "*Tempora*

mutantur et mutamur in illis. Truly, there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous," he exclaimed.

"Pray confine yourself to the Latin," I rejoined. "It is the very thing for you. Such a dignified, philosophic language! It is the only proper vehicle for the expression of such terse aphorisms of wisdom."

"Let him talk—Fred is a privileged character," said Matilda.

"Two against one! I'll give in. I see how it is. After all your high tragedy airs, you only waited the opportunity of getting my back turned to descend from your stilts, and putting your heads together, conspire in this unconscionable way against poor me. I might have known what the result of leaving you together would be. But," he suddenly asked, assuming a serio-comic tone, "are you quite satisfied about the letter, Fred?"

But I need not continue my story longer. Suffice it to say, that I was easily prevailed upon to accompany Fred and

his sister back to Rosedale, where I found my employer as disposed as ever to grant me the position he had formerly offered. I was at once received as a partner in the firm, and it was not long after until I took a partner to myself for life.

Christmas Carol.

Come, bairnies, come,
Come dance with joy and glee;
And merry in your home,
Another Christmas see.
But snows are falling, and winds are blowing,
And thousands there are beyond your knowing,
Of bairnies as young and as fair as you,
Whom Christmas will bring no joys unto.

Sing, bairnies, sing,
For my heart and soul rejoice,
To hear the welkin ring
With the sound of each merry voice.
But Christmas goes, and Christmas comes,
And countless numbers of little tongues,
Which gladly would sing their Christmas song,
Will be mute through this winter evening long.

Skip, bairnies, skip,
Around your Christmas tree;
No frost or cold will nip
In the bud, your mirth and glee.
But think of the many who scarce can find,
A shelter or cover from snow or wind,
Who gladly would share but a little part
Of the joy now filling each youthful heart.

Laugh, bairnies, laugh,
For now's your time to be gay;
Your childish pleasures quaff,
In your short, bright youthful day,
Before on life's billows you tumble and toss,—
For the world that's before you has many a cross
And the pleasure you find in your early years,
May be washed from your thoughts in a flood of tears.

So look, bairnies, look,
To Him who was born this day,
And read in His blessed book,
How He washed your sins away.
Then, though years may come and years may go,
Your river of life will calmly flow;
And bear you along to a haven of rest,—
To join in the praises and songs of the blest.

In Memoriam.

The Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, assassinated at Ottawa, 7th April, 1868.—The following lines were written on the evening of the same day, and appeared in the Montreal *Daily Witness* of the 8th.

Canadians weep,
  Throughout your vast domains,
A hero's gone to sleep!
  And all that now remains
Of him you loved,
  And him who loved you well,
Will soon be moved
  To sound of funeral bell.
No soldier's death
  For you he died, 'tis true,
Yet tell with bated breath
  How he has died for you;
And how he fought
  A nobler battle still,
Where depth of thought
  Was joined to strength of will;

And how each noble part,
That goes to form the man,
Dwelt in the heart
Of him, who never can
Again uplift his head
Within your senate's hall,
But now lies cold and dead,
Martyr to duty's call.

Vox Populi.

The following attempt at an embodiment of public sentiment regarding the assassination of the Hon. D'Arcy McGee appeared in the Montreal Evening *Telegraph* of 13th April.

In times like these it frequently appears,
That there are many crocodiles to shed their tears—
Reptiles themselves, who dare not do such things,
But quietly stay behind and pull the strings;
And when their plans receive their consummation,
Come forth with rueful faces to the nation,
Expressing detestation of the fools,
Who in their hands have been the wretched tools,
But whom 'tis plain to see t'would give more pain,
If their foul purpose they had failed to gain.
Justice 'tis said is blind, why should she not?
And why should one base wretch who drew the lot,
To stain his hands with murder, meet his fate
Alone? Thousands such lives would never compensate
A nation, but yet of very tender years,
Mourning a nursing Father with its tears.

Land o' the Maple Leaf.

Land o' the maple leaf, land o' the beaver,
Land by adoption o' Scotia's sons;
Land o' bricht promise tae a' those wha leave her,
Land noo the birth-place o' oor little ones—
Gladly we hail thee, thou kind foster mither;
Fond aspirations we breathe oot for thee,
Think o' thee only, and no o' anither,
Save our dear native land far ower the sea.

Proodly we'll stand for thy fame and thy cause,
Bravely defend thee frae foe an' frae wrang;
Prood o' oor kintra, oor Queen, and oor laws,
Ne'er shall be wantin' oor tribute o' sang.

Dwells there amang us the man wha forgetteth
The land o' his sires and the place o' his birth,
On whose wide-spread dominions the sun never setteth,—
The noblest, the freest, the best upon earth?

No, no, we are sons, an' are prood tae confess it,
O' the land o' the thistle, the dirk, an' claymore;
And her motto, "*Nemo me impune lacesset,*"
As Canadians, we'll wave ower oor heads evermore.

* * * * *

Oor hames are here, oor hearts are here,—
Canadian soil to us is dear;
Here hae oor little anes been born,
An' here frae us by death been torn;
Here silv'ry locks hae croon'd the head;
Here mither earth received oor dead,
Like yellow leaves which timely fa',
An' cover'd by the winter's snaw,
Return tae fructify the earth,
An' gie' new living beauties birth.

* * * * *

Dominion mithers, wha, midst hopes and fears,
Watch ower yer bairnies i' their tender years;
Wha' fain wad see them walk the narrow road,
Teach them tae love their country an' their God.

Dominion maidens, wha oor hooseholds grace,
Ye can be usefu' i' yer sphere an' place;
Around yer future a bricht halo hovers,
As the Dominion's happy wives an' mothers.

Dominion youths, yer country's hope an' stay,
Be up and doin' in yer time an' day;
Look upwards, onwards, tae yersel's be true,—
The New Dominion casts its een on you.

Dominion merchants, let yer names gang forth,
As but anither name for sterling worth;
An' at yer ca' let a' the world respond,
A New Dominion merchant's word's his bond.

Dominion farmers, still wha saw yer seed
In hope, aye look to Him, in time o' need,
Wha's faithfu' promise aye doth stand maist sure,
Seed time an' harvest ever shall endure.

Ye chosen anes wha guard oor country's faith,
Tak' tent tae what the holy Scripture saith;
Cry lood, an' spare not, show the nation's sin,
Spread wide yer nets, an' bring the people in;
'Till oor ain God his blessin' does command,
And oor Dominion mak' a holy land.

Fergus and Elora.

Early in the summer of the present year the writer visited the villages of Fergus and Elora, and being struck with the beauty of their respective situations, their close proximity, and above all, their exceedingly poetical names, he conceived the idea of representing them in the position of lovers; and he trusts that the following allegorical Idyl may not be unacceptable to the inhabitants of both places.

Ae simmer's day, just as the sun
The half o' his day's work had dune;
Altho' his rays I scarce could thole,
I set me oot to tak' a stroll,
I'll tell ye whaur and whither.
I started frae the toon o' Guelph,—
Namesake o' our gude Queen herself,
And bent my steps towards the north,
To see if there was ocht that's worth,
'Twixt it and the Grand River.

I found a fertile country wide,
Spread oot to view on ilka side,
Wi' sheep and knout in mony a field—
And healthy craps bad fair to yield,
Eneuch for man and beast.
But growin' weary wi' my walk,
I sat me doon a rest to tak',
Thankfu' at least nae scornfu' pride
Denies the man wha does na' ride,
A seat at nature's feast.

I had na' sittin' vera lang,
Before I heard a blythsome sang,
Which fell upon my listenin' ear,
Like music frae some heavenly sphere,
Which mortals overpowers.
Nor was I lang kept in suspense,
For scoogit frae me by a fence,
There sat a buxom country lass,
Ettlin, nae doot, that I wad pass
And tak' nae notice o' her.
Noo as I am but flesh and blood,
Ye canna blame me gin I stood,—
To listen to her simple strains,
I thocht at least was worth my pains,
And try to see her face.
Which sune I did, she was a queen,
A couth, and cozy ane I ween;
Aboot her neck her golden locks
Lay fair as yellow wheaten shocks,
And clearly showed her race.

She started up as I drew near;
Quoth I, my lass, ye needna fear,
There's naething sure that need alarm ye,
For by my troth I wadna harm ye—
Sit down and gie's yer crack.
The blood came mantlin' up apace,
And blushes spread upon her face,
Which showed I was aboot to hear
The oft-told tale o' hope and fear,
That follows lovers' track.

O wha can read the unwritten book,—
That volume in a maiden's look;
What heart sae cauld that can despise,
The pleading o' twa bright blue eyes,
Or hear without emotion,
The simple tale o' rustic love,
Pure as it cam' frae heaven above,
Proceed frae artless, guileless lips,
Soft as the rainbow where it dips
Its colours in the ocean.

Whae'er has seen the sun arise,
And spread his glories ower the skies,
Has learned to know, but yet in part,
How love lichts up a woman's heart,
And throws a halo round her.
A woman's love, what tongue can tell,
A woman's hate is deep as hell;
A maiden's hopes, a mother's pride—
Woman, thy name must still abide,
Enigma, none profounder.

"But noo," quoth I, "my bonnie lass,
Pray tell me hoo it comes to pass,
That ye are sittin' here, yer lane;
And whaur's yer hoose, and what's yer name;
Nor think me rude for speerin."
Says she, "I'm here at love's command,—
The hoose I live in 's close at hand;
My Fergus I am here to see:
Yon maple is oor trystin' tree,
He'll come I am na fearin'.

And as forbye my hoose and hame,
Ye also wish to ken my name,
I'll no be blate, but tell ye a',
Syne after that I maun awa,—
Kind Sir, my name's Elora.
And Fergus, wha' may be ye ken,
Is keen for me to tell him when
I'll change my name, and leave my mither,
Gang up wi' him, and live thegether,
Be his in joy and sorra.

He says he lo'es me best o' a',
He'll busk me weel and keep me braw;
He'll build for me a snug wee cot,
If I'll but gangand share his lot,
Be it for weal or woe.
Gang wi' him, lass, I ken him weel,
He is an honest kintra chiel;
And sure am I the word he's spoken
By Fergus never will be broken;
Ye maunna say him no."

She lookit at me ance or twice,
As if she liket my advice;
The way she twirl'd her apron strings
Show'd she was aff on Cupid's wings,
And couldna' for her life
Conceal the joy that filled her heart,
Tho' weel she tried to act her part,—
But a' this noo is past and ended;
Her love-sick heart she sune got mended,
For noo they 're man and wife.

And if ye gang ye'll see the spot,
Whaur they have built their tidy cot;
And rinnin' thro' the fields and lanes,
Ye'll see a lot o' weel-faur'd weans,—
Wha ken na' ocht o' sorra.
Their neebors' joy, their kintra's pride,
Beloved by a' they live aside,
Are Fergus and Elora.

The Mountain View.

The view from the mountain at Hamilton is one of the finest in the Dominion. The following lines were written on the spot, and appeared in the Hamilton *Times*.

'Twas on a Sabbath morning still,
I sat me doon upon the hill,
That's ca'd the Mountain View;
I heard the birdies lilt and sing,—
I watched the swallows on the wing;
Ontario's waters calm and deep,
Lay still as if in balmy sleep,
Before me, clear and blue.

Beneath my feet the city lay,
Clasped in the bosom of the bay,
Like lovers in embrace;
Above, the sky was clear and bright,
The sun shed beams of golden light;
All round was still, and seemed to say:
We've here a peaceful Sabbath day,
Sae dear tae a' oor race.

My heart grew warmer at the scene,
The tears came trickling frae my een,
In looking at the place,
Where I could hear frae auld an' young,
The music o' my mither tongue;
Where I could see, an' I could meet,
In mony a hoose in ilka street,
An honest Scottish face.

And as I paused, an' gazed thereon,
I thought o' years an' days bygone,
Which can return no more;
An' hoo that mony there could tell,
Wha as a stranger like mysel,
Had kind an' friendly welcome got
Frae ready hand o' brither Scot,
On landing on this shore.

Lang may this kindly spirit find
A place in every heart an' mind—
May a' be leal an' true;
May peace an' plenty aye be found,
May health an' happiness abound;
An' a' wha gaze this scene upon,
Find mair that's gude in Hamilton,
Forbye its Mountain View.

The Fenians are Coming.

The following lines were written at Toronto on hearing of the threatened Fenian invasion by General O'Neil.

The Fenians are coming, oho, oho—
The Fenians are coming, oho, oho;
But faith they had better be cautious and wary oh,
Before they cross over the Lake of Ontario.

The Fenians are holding a fair, a fair—
The Fenians are holding a fair, a fair;
They had better buy skins
For their backs and their shins,
For they'll need them ere lang very sair, sair, sair,
For they'll need them ere lang very sair.

The Fenians are shouting, oho, oho—
Their brave anes are spouting, oho, oho;
But the fare they'll get here, in the way we've been wont to,
Will be cold steel and shot from the boys of Toronto.

The Fenians are coming, a weel, a weel—
The Fenians are coming, a weel, a weel;
But they've reckoned the cost
Without asking their host,
Tho' the man that's to bring them's O'Neil, O'Neil,
Tho' the man that's to bring them's O'Neil.

But wha'll tak' them back, oh wha, oh wha—
But wha'll tak' them back, oh wha, oh wha;
It'll no be five dollars,
But ropes round their collars,
They'll get for their whack big and sma, sma, sma,
They'll get for their whack big and sma.

The brave Montrealers, an' a', an' a'—
The brave Montrealers, an' a', an' a',
Have a rod laid in pickle,
With which they will tickle,
And drive the vile reptiles awa', awa',
And drive the vile reptiles awa'.

Then hurrah for oor Queen, boys, hurrah' hurrah,
She's the best ane we've seen yet, ava, ava;
She's fair and she's good
In her lone widowhood:
So stand fast to her cause ane an' a', an' a',
So stand fast to her cause ane an' a'.

Ye Ladies Fair.

To enable the reader to understand the following lines, it is necessary to state that they were written on board the S. S. "Best Bower," Captain Waddell, while detained for three days in Cuxhaven Roads, on her voyage from Hamburg to Leith. The voyage usually performed in fifty-four hours was protracted by bad weather, and a heavy deck load of fruit and cattle, to eight days. A number of the passengers, to while away the time, agreed to write a poetical account of the voyage, which drew the following impromptu from the Author.

Ye ladies fair, ye bearded men and shaven,
Imprison'd in the "Bower" before Cuxhaven,
On your behalf I now invoke the Muse,
And trust her kindly aid she'll not refuse.

Poets have written, and all sages say,
Patience a virtue is, we day by day,
Ought all to practice in each trying hour—
I doubt they've never made a passage in the "Bower;"

For when she sails to this from Hamburg's city,
And takes three days to do it, 'tis a pity,
That they with stock of patience so unbounded,
Should miss the chance—why hang it, 'tis confounded.

It never was a bargain in life's battle
To be cooped up on deck with fruit and cattle;
All these are, no doubt, good things in their way,
But bad companions in a storm at "say."

When people travel by a railway train,
There one can always some advantage gain:
For those disgusted with the speed or motion,
Can leave at the first station, if they have the notion.

But here the case is otherwise, you know,
No matter be the progress fast or slow;
In patience you must eat from off your dishes,
Or jump into the sea, and feed the fishes.

And I am sure had Job or sage Shakespeare—
From aught of either we can read or hear,
Embarked with us, they'd sorely have repented,
Had both not positively gone demented.

But if there is no rose without a thorn,
Or joy unmixed to man of woman born;
Still it is no less true, as each one knows,
That there are seldom thorns without a rose.

And so it was, my friends, with you and me,
For when 'twas found we could not go to sea,
To see we went what we could see on shore,
You see it was not possible we could do more.

And thus 'twixt land and sea, and sea and land,
We always had resources at our hand;
With books and cards, and various other ways,
We managed pleasantly to spend eight days.

Kind reader, should it your intention be
To make a voyage 'cross the Northern Sea,
Depend on this, you'll neither fare nor feed ill,
If you entrust yourself to Captain Waddell.

The Wayfarer's Song.

Through this world I've roamed, and wandered for years;
I've tasted its pleasures, shared its hopes and its fears;
I've journeyed by land and have sailed o'er the sea,
But all now have lost their attractions for me.

And what, do you ask, brings this change o'er the scene?
What change has occurred my affections to wean?
What makes me once more long to cross o'er the sea,
But the home with its loved one that's waiting for me.

Then tell me no more of the gay city's throng—
Its pipes and its tabrets, its dance and its song—
Let my heart-strings all chord and my music still be
For my home with its loved one that's waiting for me.

Tell me not of those pleasurers base natures enjoy,
Engrossing their thoughts, as their daily employ;
Let me still find my pleasure where my pleasure should be,
In my home with the loved one that's waiting for me.

Then quickly I'll speed me my way to the goal,
Where, though absent my body, still is present my soul;
Once more I'll rejoice in, once more will I see
The home with its loved one that's waiting for me.

Sunrise.

Sun of the morning, bright are thy beams,
This earth adorning with thy golden streams;
Emblem of glory and source of our days,
For thee is my story, for thee is my praise;
Emblem of Him who is Lord over all,
Who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all.

May He, who at first, by the word of His might,
On this earth, then uncursed, made thee shed forth
thy light;
May he who ordained thee to rule o'er the day,
At whose fiat thick darkness and clouds fled away
Atune my dull heart, and my spirit control,
And banish all darkness and clouds from my soul.

Sabbath Evening Reflections.

May the services, Lord, of this day not be found
To have been like water that's spilled on the ground,
But enriched by Thy blessing, may they teach me
the road,
To the rest which remains for the people of God.

Yet Lord, Thou dost know how large is the part,
The things of this world have had of my heart;
And the little regard I too often have shown,
To this day of the seven so expressly Thine own.

Bless what is Thine own, and forgive what is mine,
And fill my whole soul with Thy precepts divine;
Dispel the dark clouds that would hinder the light
From reaching my heart in its force and its might.

In numberless ways from Thy dwelling above,
Thou hast showered upon me the proofs of Thy
love;
Next to Thee may I prize the day Thou hast given,
As a foretaste of what is experienced in heaven.

Our Child in Heaven.

We have a little child in heaven
So sweet and fair,
A little pledge in mercy given,
To guide us there.

We have a little child in glory—
Oh, blessed thought!—
Whom Jesus tells the wondrous story
Of what he bought.

We have a child before His throne
By day and night,
All clothed in raiment not his own,
Garments of light.

We have a child whom Jesus guides
In pastures green,
Watches and cares for, and provides
With bliss unseen.

We have a child who sings his praises
Midst angel throng,—
A little voice 'mongst them, which raises
The Lamb's own song.

We have a child from sorrow free,
And all alarms—
Safe, gentle Shepherd, safe with Thee,
In thine own arms.

The Emigrant's Prayer.

Written on the Author's first arrival in Canada. The allusion in the second line of the first stanza, is to an accident by which he was deprived of one of his hands.

Far from my home, my God,—
Under Thy chastening rod,
Hither I am brought.
Oh, cause Thy glorious light to shine
Into this weary heart of mine,
And to Thy blessed will divine,
Bring each rebellious thought.

Here may my course be straight,
On through the narrow gate
That leadeth unto life.
Oh! make and keep me pure within,
And with each strong besetting sin,
Thy strength afford me to begin,
A never ending strife.

How and where Thy hand may lead,
I know not, but Thou know'st I need
Thy all sustaining grace,
That every day with Thee begun,
May see each work and duty done
In fear of Thee, thou Three in One,
Who fillest earth and space.

Far from wife and children dear,
A solitary stranger here,
To Thee, our God, I pray.
Give us each day our daily bread;
And cover our defenceless head—
In every path we're called to tread,
Give strength from day to day.

Guard with thy covering hand
All in my native land
Still near and dear to me.
When joys and griefs and sins are o'er,—
When earth and sea and time's no more,
May we all enter through the door,
Lord Jesus, God, to Thee.

Voyagers' Hymn.

Written in mid ocean, on the passage to New York, and sung by the passengers on board the S. S. Europa.

TUNE—"Portuguese Hymn."

Thus far in safety we are brought,
Lord, by Thy help our journey through,
Oh! may we praise Thee as we ought,
And give Thee all the glory due.

Thou hold'st in hollow of Thy hands
The heavens and earth and rolling seas;
They all obey Thy great commands,
And execute Thy high decrees.

Be with us, Lord, in what we've still
Of this our journey to perform;
And if it be Thy holy will,
Defend us all from every storm.

And when our journey's o'er and past,
And we have reached our destined shore,
May we all meet in heaven at last,
If on this earth we meet no more.

Ye Banks and Waves of Newfoundland.

Written whilst crossing the Banks.

Ye banks and waves of Newfoundland
  Hoo can ye look sae bleak an' bare;
There's nocht on you but sea and sand,
  An' for yer looks I dinna care;
Ye'll break my heart, ye muckle cods,
  That gambol through this stormy sea,
But I will lay a heavy odds,
  That cods and sauce are best for me.

Oft hae I roamed the decks around
  To look for ocht that's fresh or new,
But naething else is to be found,
  Save sickening scenes an' waters blue;
But let me once set foot on shore,
  Once clear of ship, an' sea an' pork,
I'll think twice of it ere before,
  I come across ye to New York.